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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

VOL. 41, NO. 12

MARCH 15, 1948

WHOLE NO. 1082

MEETINGS AHEAD; SCHOLARSHIPS

MANIUS CURIUS (*McDermott*)

THE COMMON PEOPLE OF HOMER'S WORLD (*Schoder*)

UBINAM GENTIUM SUMUS? (*Smith*)

GERMAN AND ITALIAN PUBLICATIONS IN CLASSICS, 1940-5 (*Ullman et al.*)

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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

Volume 41 contains issues dated: October 6, 20; November 3, 17; December 1, 15 (1947); January 5, 19; February 2, 16; March 1, 15; April 5, 19; May 3, 17 (1948).

Published semi-monthly from October to May inclusive by The Classical Association of the Atlantic States. Place of Publication: Bennett Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania. Printed by The Science Press Printing Company, Lancaster, Pa.

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Price, \$2.50 per volume in the Western Hemisphere; elsewhere \$3.00. All subscriptions run by the volume. Single numbers: to subscribers 20 cents, to others 30 cents prepaid (otherwise 30 cents and 40 cents). If affidavit to invoice is required, sixty cents must be added to the subscription price. For residents of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, or the District of Columbia, a subscription to THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY (or, alternatively, to the Classical Journal) is included in the membership fee of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, whose members are also entitled to The Classical Outlook and The Classical Journal at special prices in combinations available from the Secretary.

Entered as second-class matter November 7, 1945, at the Post Office at Philadelphia, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in the Act of February 28, 1925, authorized October 14, 1938.

THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW ENGLAND

The Classical Association of New England will hold its forty-second annual meeting at Amherst College, Amherst, Mass., on Friday and Saturday, April 2 and 3, 1948.

The following papers will be presented during the sessions of the meeting: *The Owl and the Olive Tree*, by Prof. Norman O. Brown of Wesleyan University; *A Report of Progress on the Corpus of Averroes' Commentaries*, by Prof. Francis H. Fobes of Amherst College; *Apolonius Rhodius and Vergil: Gods, Heroes, and Episodes*, by Norman L. Hatch of Phillips Exeter Academy; *'Intimations of Immortality' in Horace*, by Prof. G. L. Hendrickson of Yale University; *The Descent of the Toga* (Illustrated) by Professor Emeline Hill of Wheaton College; *The School Greek Course*, by Dr. Allan S. Hoey of The Hotchkiss School; *Cicero and his Devotion to Expediency*, by the Reverend Paul F. Izzo, S.J. of The College of the Holy Cross; *A Greek Uncial Fragment in the Library of Congress* (Illustrated) by Prof. Werner Jaeger of Harvard University; *Functional Latin—If at All*, by Miss Helen G. Kershaw of the Melrose High School; *The Positive Beliefs of the Skeptic Carneades*, by Prof. Edwin L. Minar, Jr. of Connecticut College; *Ten Thousand Panoplies*, by Miss Dorothy Rounds of the Arlington High School; *Plutarch and Tranquillity of Mind*, by Prof. Emily L. Shields of Smith College; and *A Bouquet of Similes*, by Miss Marion B. Steuerwald of the Belmont High School.

The annual dinner will take place on Friday evening, and for this occasion attending members are invited to be the guests of Amherst College. Following the dinner, there will be an address by Professor John Erskine of Columbia University; his subject will be: *The Cost of the Sabine Farm*.

Teachers and friends of the Classics are cordially invited to attend the open sessions of the meeting. Further information may be secured from the Chairman of the local Committee on Arrangements, Prof. Manford V. Kern, Amherst College, Amherst, Mass. or from the Secretary of the Association, Prof. Van L. Johnson, Tufts College, Medford 55, Mass.

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY FOREIGN LANGUAGE CONFERENCE

To aid in implementing the needs of teachers on all levels of education in the emphasis that is being placed on foreign languages in an international world, the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Kentucky is sponsoring the University of Kentucky Foreign Language Conference on April 22-24, 1948, with Dr. Walter B. Agard, University of Wisconsin (Classical languages), Dr. Fredrick B. Wahr, University of Michigan (Germanic languages), and Dr. James B. Tharp, Ohio State University (Romance languages) as the lecturers. There will also be some fifty invited papers from several states. A special feature will be a high school principals' panel on *Foreign Languages in the Modern Secondary School*. The theme of the conference will be *Foreign Languages for Enlightenment*.

Not only foreign-language teachers but also principals and superintendents interested in the modern trends in foreign-language teaching are invited to attend. Professor Jonah W. D. Skiles, Department of Ancient Languages, is director of the conference, and Professor Adolph E. Bigge, Department of German, and Professor L. Hobart Ryland, Department of Romance Languages, are associate directors of the conference.

Programs may be had from Professor Jonah W. D. Skiles, Director of the Foreign Language Conference, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.

AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME

The Classical Society of the American Academy in Rome is raising funds to be used for scholarships for students in the Summer Session of 1948. Preference will be given to teachers in the secondary schools. Applications and requests for information should be sent to Miss Mary T. Williams, Executive Secretary of the American Academy in Rome, 101 Park Ave., New York City.

SCHOLARSHIP AT ROCKFORD COLLEGE

Rockford College announces a departmental scholarship of \$250 for one year to be awarded to an entering student in the field of Latin. Candidates must first qualify for admission to Rockford College and be accepted for admission before they will be eligible to apply for the scholarship. Applications for the scholarship must be filed with the Director of Admission before April 1, 1948 and a written examination for the scholarship will be given not later than April 15. An application fee of \$5 is necessary to compete for the scholarship. For additional information communicate with the Director of Admission, Rockford College, Rockford, Illinois.

MANIUS CURIUS

The pages of Cicero's letters, essays and orations show that he had an extraordinarily wide circle of friends and acquaintances. His political and intellectual interests, his charm and ready wit attracted young and old alike to him. In his earlier days he was the companion of the venerable augur, Q. Mucius Scaevola;¹ in his later days he was on familiar terms with Caelius

Rufus, M. Brutus, Trebatius Testa; at all periods of his life he had friends of his own age, Atticus, Hortensius, Sulpicius Rufus.² Part of his sociability was his unending interest in all things: *scio quam sis curiosus*;³ *sumus enim ambo belle curiosi*.⁴

In his *Laelius* Cicero draws a picture of friendship, which is based on moral worth. No evil man can know the meaning of this emotion: *sed hoc primum sentio, nisi in bonis amicitiam esse non posse*.⁵ Since in actual practice Cicero followed a more human standard, his friends varied not only in age but also in character: with Cato we can contrast Caelius Rufus, with M. Brutus, Cornelius Dolabella.

His friends were drawn from all of the strata of society. He had won for his family a position among the senatorial families and naturally many of his friends, especially when he was *consularis*, were from the nobility. In politics Cicero labored for the *concordia ordinum*, the harmony of the senatorial and equestrian classes. Cicero's wide circle of equestrian friends was an important reason why he was able to hold such a combination together for even a short time. From this class the names of Matius,⁶ Paetus,⁷ M. Marius,⁸ and others can be cited. In many cases these friends of Cicero are known to us only because they appear in the letters. Even Atticus owes his chief fame to Cicero: *nomen Attici perire Ciceronis epistulae non sinunt. nihil illi profuisset gener Agrippa et Tiberius progener et Drusus Caesar pronepos; inter tam magna nomina taceretur, nisi sibi Cicero illum adplicuisset*.⁹ When Suetonius mentions him he says: *... Attici equitis R., ad quem sunt Ciceronis epistulae* . . .¹⁰

One man whom Cicero rescued from complete oblivion is Manius Curius, a business man in Patrae on the northern coast of the Peloponnesus. This man is not mentioned in the biographies of Cicero by Middleton and Sihler; Strachan-Davidson mentions him only in quoting a letter from Cicero to Curius;¹¹ Tyrrell and Purser outline his career in 21 lines,¹² and Muenzer in 42.¹³ And yet he has a certain interest to us. After a fashion he represents a large group of men who are unimportant *inter magna nomina* but are significant in understanding the age of Cicero. A

brief account of his life can be reconstructed from the letters.

While Cicero was in camp during the last days of his proconsulship in Cilicia, he wrote to his new quaestor, C. Coelius Caldus, who replaced L. Mescinius Rufus, and under whom the province was left. In this letter he says: '... your cousin, Curius, who is a great friend of mine, ... has written me very conscientiously about you ...'¹⁴ Since no further identification is given, it is not possible to ascertain whether this is the banker of Patrae or not.¹⁵ When Cicero and his entourage were returning from the province to Italy, they stopped at Patrae, where Tiro, his confidential secretary, fell ill. When Cicero left, on November 2, it was necessary to leave Tiro behind.¹⁶ Luckily for Tiro he had comfortable lodgings with Lyso; a doctor named Asclapso was available,¹⁷ and Manius Curius promised to look after him. Curius was highly commended to Tiro by Cicero and in later letters we discover that he is a close friend of Cicero and Atticus. 'I have written at length to Curius, a very charming, conscientious, and humane man; indeed, in my letter I said that he should move you to his own house if you preferred it.'¹⁸ Cicero added that he had given orders to Curius that Tiro should receive as much money as he wanted.¹⁹ That Curius kept watch over Tiro carefully is evident from later letters. When Cicero speaks about the possibility that Tiro might follow him he tells him to see 'what is pleasing to Curius, Lyso, and the doctor.' In the same letter he says: 'I place every hope of your being diligently cared for in Curius. Nobody can be more kindly than he is, nor more devoted to me. Give yourself over wholly to him.'²⁰ Writing to Atticus, Cicero says: 'I place my highest hope in the care of Manius Curius, about which Tiro has written me and many messages have come. Curius himself realized how much you wished that he be cherished by me, and I am quite pleased with him. And by heaven, there's a native wit in the man one might easily love. I am bringing back his will sealed by three Ciceros and the staff. He openly made you heir of fifteen per cent of his estate and me of two and one-half per cent.'²¹ In December Cicero again speaks to Atticus concerning Curius: 'Hope of Tiro's recovery is

placed in the hands of Manius Curius, to whom I have written that in this way he will make himself extremely pleasing to you.'²² Later we hear that Curius reported directly to Cicero about Tiro's condition.²³ In February a note to Atticus suggests that some trouble had occurred in the financial arrangements—Tiro had to borrow money, a fact which Cicero hoped was due to 'Tiro's modesty rather than Curius' lack of liberality.'²⁴ This is followed by a request to Atticus to forward a batch of letters to Curius and to see that Curius makes the proper financial arrangements for Tiro.²⁵ In March he asks Atticus to have Curius write about Tiro, who has taken a turn for the worse.²⁶

These scattered items can be supplemented by six letters which deal with Curius more fully. All of these come after the time of Tiro's illness. Three are letters from Cicero to Curius, one from Curius to Cicero, and two are recommendations written for Curius by Cicero.²⁷

(1) The first of these letters is a friendly, informal note written from Rome about the middle of the year 46. 'I remember when you seemed unwise to me in choosing to live with your friends in Patrae rather than with us at Rome; for this city, when it was a city, was more suitable for your cultivated charm (*humanitati et suavitati*) than the whole Peloponnesus, let alone Patrae. Now, on the contrary, you seem to me to have been quite foresighted when you went to Greece after our condition here became almost hopeless (*prope desperatis his rebus*). And now you are not only wise, since you are away from Rome, but also happy. ... I get almost the same result by another method. When I have met my friends at my morning reception, which is better attended than usual since they seem to see an honest citizen, a sight as rare as a white bird, I hide myself in my library. Consequently I am completing works which you may consider of some worth. I realized from a certain conversation we had at your home when you blamed me for my sorrow and desperation that you claimed that you missed my old spirit in my recent works. ...' Since Cicero had not been out of Italy since his unhappy return to Brundisium in 48 after the battle of Pharsalia and since Curius probably had not been in Italy since sometime be-

fore 50, this conversation at the home of Curius had probably taken place at Patrae in 48. The difficulty with this solution is that after Cicero finished the *De Re Publica* in 52 he did not produce any works of importance until 46, when he completed the *Brutus* and the *Orator*. Perhaps Curius had read a first draft of part of the *De Legibus*. The whole tone of this letter is similar to that of some of the letters to Atticus.

(2) In the same year Cicero wrote a letter of recommendation to Ser. Sulpicius Rufus, who in 46 was appointed governor of Achaëa by Caesar.²⁸ It is one of the most cordial of the 13 letters of recommendation written in 46 by Cicero to Sulpicius.²⁹ 'There are many strong reasons for me to cherish Manius Curius who is a banker at Patrae (*qui Patris negotiatur*). My friendship with him is very old, begun when he first came into the Forum. At Patrae his home was wholly at my disposal several times in earlier days, most recently during this lamentable war—had there been need I would have used it as my own. The greatest bond between us, a bond which is, as it were, a sacred connection, is that he is extremely intimate with our friend Atticus and honors and cherishes him beyond all other men. . . . So I recommend him to you in such a way that I could not recommend anyone else with greater zeal or for better reasons. . . .' The phrase *ut primum in forum venit* may imply that Curius had started a legal career, but had later turned to business. It is interesting to note that of the *epistulae commendaticiae* included in the 13th book of the *Ad Familiares* about one-third were written in 46, when Cicero, as a prominent *consularis* of senatorial sympathies but on fairly cordial terms with Caesar, would frequently be asked for recommendations. This letter demonstrates a minor instance of Cicero's strong sense of gratitude. He did not forget the favors which he had received and made every honorable effort to repay them. The most striking example is found in his defense of Milo. Milo had been one of those chiefly responsible for Cicero's recall from exile. Consequently, when Milo was tried in 52 for the murder of Clodius, Cicero bent every effort in his behalf. Asconius makes this comment. 'So great was the constancy and good faith of Cicero that he could not be kept from defending him by the alienation

of the people, by the suspicions of Gnaeus Pompey, by the peril that a day of trial before the people would be set for him or by weapons which were openly assumed against Milo; although he would have been able to avoid all peril and the ill-will of a hostile multitude and even to recover the good-will of Gnaeus Pompey, had he given way a little in his zeal for the defense.'³⁰

(3) Curius had written to Cicero a number of times at the time of Tiro's illness but none of the letters has been preserved. The sole extant letter from Curius was written October 29, 45, and was a request for a second letter of recommendation. 'I am pleased if you are in good health, for I am yours by lease, by title I belong to our Atticus. Therefore use of me is yours, ownership his. But indeed if he should put me up for sale in a batch of old slaves (*inter senes comptionalis*), he wouldn't get much. But my value is enhanced by my constant declaration that I owe everything to you, my existence, my possessions, my good reputation. Wherefore, dear Cicero, steadfastly continue to preserve me and recommend me with a special fervor to the successor of Sulpicius that I may more easily be able to follow your teaching and to see you more freely in the spring, to break up my home here and bring it to Rome safely. But, my influential friend, don't show this letter to Atticus; let him be wrong and think that I am a good man, unaccustomed to whiten two walls from the same bucket. So, dear patron, farewell and give my best regards to Tiro.' This clever letter illustrates quite well the opinion expressed by Cicero that Curius was a man of native wit (*urbanitas*).³¹ Professor Tyrrell thinks the wit forced³² and the effusiveness quite excessive³³ but tastes differ—*de urbanitate non est disputandum*. There is a decided flavor of technical language drawn from business—we may wonder whether the letters of Atticus did not have that flavor too. Curius' use of everyday expressions including the proverb toward the end of the letter (*duo parietes de eadem fidelia dealbare*) is noteworthy. This colloquial tone is discussed by J. H. Schmalz in his elaborate study of the language of this short letter.³⁴ Curius' reference to himself as *senex* shows that he was of about the same age as Cicero.³⁵ It has been suggested by Reid that

the statement of Curius in this letter of his debt to Cicero reflects the possibility that Curius may have been defended successfully in court by Cicero.³⁶ Apparently in the law courts it was standard practice to speak as though life were at stake when a case involved *deminutio capitis*. Cicero does this in his published defense of Milo³⁷—it is probable that even when the stake was less comparable exaggeration would be used. If Curius had been defended by Cicero, it was probably not on a major charge. However, fulsome language was common. In a meeting of the senate in February, 61: 'Crassus . . . rose and spoke in so complimentary a manner about my consulship, that he said that he considered it a gift from me that he was a senator, a citizen, free and alive: as often as he looked at his wife, his fatherland, so often did he see the result of my good deeds.'³⁸ Of course Crassus was especially complimentary because his words annoyed Pompey, but such flattery must have been common. Curius probably was employing the methods of Crassus but with genuine good will toward Cicero.

(4) Cicero replied to Curius at the beginning of the next year (January, 44): 'Truly now I do not urge or ask you to come home, rather I myself wish to fly from here and arrive some place "where I will hear neither the name nor the deeds of the Pelopidae"'. It is unbelievable how vilely I seem to act when I am present during such events. Indeed you seem to have foreseen much better what was in store when you fled from this place. Although such deeds are bitter to hear, it is much more endurable to hear than to see them. . . . At the seventh hour Caesar proclaimed a consul who would serve until January 1, which would be the morning of the next day. So know that nobody had lunch while Caninius was consul. Nevertheless no crime was committed while he was consul, for he was so remarkably vigilant that he did not sleep during his entire consulship. These things seem ridiculous to you—you aren't here; if you were looking at them, you would not restrain your tears. . . . Acilius, who has been sent to Greece with an army, is under the greatest obligation to me, since twice when his civil rights were endangered he was successfully (*rebus salvis*) defended by me. Also he is not an ungrateful man and honors me

markedly. I have written very carefully to him about you and I have attached that letter to this. I want you to write and tell me how he has received my letter and what he has promised you.' As is so often the case, for example, in his letters to Paetus, Cicero jests in a letter to a witty correspondent. Cicero's witticisms were famous. Tiro collected and published Cicero's witty remarks in three books.³⁹ Quintilian complains that Tiro's collection showed industry rather than criticism. Macrobius and Plutarch both give examples of his *urbanitas*.⁴⁰ His jokes at the expense of Rebilus were especially famous. The one in the letter to Curius is given in a different version by Trebellius Pollio, when he is commenting on M. Aurelius Marius Augustus, who was said to have reigned for three days.⁴¹ 'He was like that consul who held the consulate for six hours in the middle of the day and was mocked by Marcus Tullius with such a jest: "We have a consul so severe and so rigorous that nobody lunched, dined, or slept in his magistracy."⁴² Again Plutarch reports that when Rebilus was being escorted home with congratulations Cicero said: 'Let's hurry to get to him before he finishes his consulship.'⁴³ Macrobius, too, collected several jests on Rebilus.⁴⁴

(5) The *epistula commendaticia* which accompanied the preceding letter was addressed to M. Acilius Caninus,⁴⁵ successor of Sulpicius as governor of Achaëa. It obviously was likewise written at Rome in January, 45.⁴⁶ As we learn from the preceding letter, Cicero had twice defended Acilius successfully.⁴⁷ While Cicero was at Brundisium in 48-47 waiting for a conference with Caesar and uncertain whether he would find him merciful or not, he had been treated with respect by Acilius. Nevertheless the relationship between the two does not seem to have been especially close, as is evident from the tone of ten other *epistulae commendaticiae* addressed to him in 45 B.C.⁴⁸ That this letter is briefer than the one to Sulpicius Rufus is due to the character of the man addressed, not to any decrease in Cicero's regard for Curius. 'I have presumed upon your regard for me, which I was fully aware of when we were in Brundisium, to write to you in a friendly manner and rightfully if there is anything concerning which I am especially troubled. Manius Curius, who is a banker

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at Patrae, is so friendly to me that we could not be more closely joined. His services to me are numerous and mine to him, and what is of greatest moment, there is the greatest, mutual love between us. Since this is so, if you place any confidence in my friendship, if you wish the services and the zeal which you offered me at Brundisium to be even more pleasing to me, although they are very pleasing, if you see that I am loved by your friends, grant as a gift to me that you preserve Manius Curius safe and sound (*sartum et tectum*), as the saying goes, whole and untouched by any inconvenience, harm or damage. . . . The phraseology in the last line is humorously adapted from the legal terminology of building contracts.

(6) Curius immediately replied stating that he had not had to use this letter of recommendation. Curius' reply is lost but we have a brief note written by Cicero in February of the same year. 'I easily gathered from your letter what I have always desired, namely that you have the highest regard for me and that you realize how dear you are to me. . . . I am pleased that it was unnecessary to give my letter to Acilius. I realize from your letter that Sulpicius' help was not much needed since your business was so contracted (*res ita contractas*) that, as you write, it had 'no head or feet': indeed I might wish that it had feet that you might foot it back here at some time. So you see my old wit has run dry, . . . Come to Rome, therefore, I beg you, lest the seed of wit (*urbanitatis*) perish together with the state.' Cicero has properly apologized for his feeble witicism, which was not improved in the translation.

One further reference to Curius occurs in a letter to Atticus written July 17, 44. 'I hope that Curius will send these letters to me.'⁴⁹ Although he is in himself worthy of affection and is cherished by me, nevertheless your recommendation adds a great deal.'

The references here discussed give us a brief but fairly satisfactory picture of a Roman business man. Curius was probably an *eques*, as Abbott says.⁵⁰ When he addressed Cicero, he was undoubtedly addressing a man of higher rank but not with subservience. To be sure, Cicero sometimes uses a tone of equality with Tiro and others of a lower social status, but his mode

of addressing Curius is not inconsistent with this conclusion. *Negotiatores* were, of course, not drawn solely from the equestrian class, but most of the important *negotiatores* were *equites*. This conclusion would be consistent with his being the cousin of Coelius Caldus, who held the first important office in the *cursus honorum*. He was not far in age from Cicero and Atticus. While still in Rome he may have been defended in court by Cicero. He may have entered a career as a lawyer, but by the time he left Rome he was definitely concerned solely with business. Cicero's letters indicate that he had not begun his self-imposed exile nearly so early as did Atticus, who went to Athens about 86 or 85.⁵¹ He had obviously left Rome sometime before 50 B.C. His departure, after conditions became almost hopeless at Rome, probably fell shortly before 60 B.C., when power was being concentrated in the hands of Pompey, Caesar, and Crassus. Before 60 Cicero's *concordia ordinum* had raised the hopes of the conservatives, but a man of keen wit might well have foreseen the coalition of 60 and the events which came to a head in 59. Had he not left until the consulship of Caesar made it obvious to all that the revolution was at hand, Cicero in the year 46 could hardly have thought him foresighted. He may have visited Rome later, but there is no indication of this. By 50, when Tiro fell ill at Patrae, he seems to have become an established resident of Patrae and to have had a flourishing business there. The business may be called banking but, like most such businesses in ancient times, was more miscellaneous than the modern word indicates. His transfer of funds to Tiro would not only be a favor to Cicero but also part of his ordinary routine. At the time Acilius arrived as governor of Achaëa he was so fully occupied that he wanted no additional business. In this town on the route between Rome and the East, his personal and business contacts must have been numerous. Transfer of information and letters frequently must have been a part of his business, as indicated in the last reference to him in 44 B.C. He probably entertained many important Romans in his home in Patrae. He was near Athens and the estate of Atticus at Buthrotum in Epirus so that he

must have had many opportunities to enjoy the fruits of friendship with Atticus.

NOTES

- ¹ *Brutus*, 306.
- ² Nepos' statement about Atticus is here adapted to his more famous friend (*vita Attici* 16.1).
- ³ Caelius, *F.* 8.1.1 (192) May 24, 51. Wherever the text of the letters has been quoted or translated, it follows R. Y. Tyrrell and L. C. Purser, *The Correspondence of M. Tullius Cicero*, I³, II-VI², Dublin, 1904-33. The number in T. and P. has been included in parentheses when necessary. Where dates are included they follow Tyrrell and Purser. *Epistulae ad Atticum* and *Epistulae ad familiares* are abbreviated to *A.* and *F.*
- ⁴ *A.* 6.1.25 (252) Feb. 20, 50.
- ⁵ *De Amicitia* 18.
- ⁶ *F.* 11.17-18.
- ⁷ *F.* 9.15-26.
- ⁸ *F.* 7.1-4.
- ⁹ Seneca, *Ep.* 21.4.
- ¹⁰ *Tiberius* 7.2.
- ¹¹ *Cicero and the Fall of the Roman Republic* (New York, 1894), pp. 378 f. (a translation from *F.* 7.30.1-2).
- ¹² IV², p. 415, the introduction to *F.* 7.28 (477).
- ¹³ *RE*, IV.2 (1901), col. 1840, s.v. Curius No. 6.
- ¹⁴ *F.* 2.19.2 (262) June 21, 50.
- ¹⁵ Muenzer accepts the identification of Coelius' cousin as Manius Curius.
- ¹⁶ Cf. *F.* 16.1-9; 11-12: from Cicero and members of his family to Tiro (between Nov. 2, 50-Jan. 29, 49).
- ¹⁷ *F.* 13.20 recommends Asclapso to Ser. Sulpicius.
- ¹⁸ *F.* 16.4.2 (288), Nov. 7, 50.
- ¹⁹ Cf. *F.* 16.9.3 and 4 (292), Nov. 26, 50.
- ²⁰ *F.* 16.5.1 and 2 (289), Nov. 7, 50.
- ²¹ *A.* 7.2.3 (293) Nov. 26, 50. Cf. Boot *a.h.l.*, whose text for the latter part of this passage is somewhat different. The will is mentioned again *A.* 7.3.9 (294), Dec. 9, 50.
- ²² *A.* 7.3.12 (294), Dec. 9, 50.
- ²³ *F.* 16.11.1 (301), Jan. 12, 49.
- ²⁴ *A.* 8.6.5 (337), Feb. 21, 49.
- ²⁵ *A.* 8.5.2 (336), Feb. 22, 49.
- ²⁶ *A.* 9.17.2 (375), March 27, 49.
- ²⁷ (1) *F.* 7.28 (477), August (?) 46—Cicero to Curius; (2) *F.* 13.17 (512), 46 B.C.—Cicero to Ser. Sulpicius; (3) *F.* 7.29 (677), Oct. 29, 45—Curius to Cicero; (4) *F.* 7.30 (694), Jan., 44—Cicero to Curius; (5) *F.* 13.50 (695), Jan., 44—Cicero to Acilius; (6) *F.* 7.31 (697), Feb., 44—Cicero to Curius.
- ²⁸ T. and P., IV², p. xci.
- ²⁹ *F.* 13.17-28b (512-524).
- ³⁰ *In Milonianam* 39.
- ³¹ *A.* 7.2.3 (293), Nov. 26, 50.
- ³² IV², p. 415 (introduction to 477).
- ³³ V², p. 206 (*a.h.l.*).
- ³⁴ *Zeitschrift fuer das Gymnasialwesen*, 35 (1881), pp. 137-141.

³⁵ There is no need to suppose, as Schmalz does, that Curius had read Plautus, *Bacchides* 976 (. . . comptionalem senem . . .).

³⁶ This suggestion is included in a note on this letter by T. and P., V², p. 206.

³⁷ *Pro Milone* 5, 7, 31 *et aliter*: cf. the excellent note on paragraph 5 by A. C. Clark in his edition of this speech (1895).

³⁸ *A.* 1.14.3 (20), Feb. 13, 61.

³⁹ Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 6.3.5; Macrobius, *Sat.* 2.1.12; *schol. Bob. in Pro Sestio* 135 (Orelli-Baiter, p. 309, 31 f.).

⁴⁰ Macrobius, *Sat.* 2.3.1-16 *et aliter*; Plutarch, *Vita Ciceronis* 25.2-27.

⁴¹ In 269, cf. A. Alföldi in *CAH*, XII (1939), pp. 191-2.

⁴² *Tyr. trig.* 8.1. The version in Macrobius (*Sat.* 2.3.6) is closer to the item in the letter to Curius.

⁴³ *Vita Caesaris* 58.1.

⁴⁴ *Sat.* 2.3.6; 7.3.10.

⁴⁵ Cicero uses only the name Acilius: the full name M. Acilius Caninus follows the note of T. and P., V², pp. 214-215 (intro. note to 682): cf. Klebs, *RE*, I (1894), cols. 252-3, s.v. Acilius no. 15.

⁴⁶ T. and P. incorrectly put a question mark after 'Rome' in the heading to this letter (V², p. 231).

⁴⁷ T. and P.'s interpretation of *rebus salvis* 'successfully' (V², p. 230 *a.h.l.*) is undoubtedly correct.

⁴⁸ *F.* 13.30-39 (682-691). This is the only instance in *F.* 13 where the letters to one man are not grouped (the letter concerning Curius is *F.* 13.50).

⁴⁹ *A.* 16.3.3 (773): . . . *eas litteras*. . . The reference is to two letters—from Quintus filius to Atticus and the reply.

⁵⁰ F. F. Abbott, *Selected Letters of Cicero* (1897), p. 146 (comment on *F.* 16.4.2).

⁵¹ Cf. Nepos, *Vita Attici* 2.2.

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THE COMMON PEOPLE OF HOMER'S WORLD

There is probably no better proof of Homer's deep interest in human life than the way in which he brings into the great pageant of his poems a multitude of secondary personalities taken from every section of daily life. They are the common people of his world, yet presented to us with a sympathy and an insight which saves them any embarrassment at appearing in the illustrious company of his great heroes. Most of them speak not a word; many play their whole part within two lines; some are referred to only in a single phrase. We meet most of them incidentally by

way of some passing simile or other casual glance in their direction. All enter the story by one or other of the countless tracts of association in Homer's mind, that copious treasure-house so richly stored with the most minute and world-roving scenes from human life.

The unparalleled wealth of great characters who are made to live before us in the Homeric poems is a source of unceasing interest and wonder to the reader of Homer's lays. A no less peculiar charm of Homer is the way in which he adds to this brilliant galaxy of more or less permanent stars so rich and assorted a stream of persons to flash momentarily across our vision like an intermittent shower of meteors, brief in appearance, suddenly and silently entering our view, yet long remembered for their grace and brilliance.

In this manner, we get glimpses of the common people of Homer's world in their daily occupations, and see snatches of the multifarious activity that goes peacefully along among the folk, little affected by the epic adventures of the outstanding few amid their contemporaries. These brief references are remarkably vivid, concrete, and deftly drawn, generally making an impression out of all proportion to their length. They occur with unparalleled frequency for this type of poem,¹ and make Homer's works national epics in the fullest sense, since they mirror a whole people as well as constitute the common cultural heritage of the Greek world. A mere list of the more important of these passages will show how true this is.

In the course of the Homeric poems, we have fleeting glimpses of the humble poor woman, spinning wool all day that she may bring home her 'miserable wages' for the support of her children (*Il.* 12.433-5); of the group of hoary-headed elders sitting around a wedding dance 'in a reverend circle' (*Il.* 18.503-4), or the busy judge snatching a bite to eat between cases (*Od.* 12.439-40). There is the old slave working alone far into the night, grinding meal for the suitors, and crying out a prayer to Zeus that the thunder-clap which he sends as an omen to Odysseus may mark the last day for her shameless and haughty masters:

'They have worn out my old body with spirit-crushing toil, a-work at grinding their barley. May this be the last meal they ever eat!' (*Od.* 20.109-19).

We see a woman weaving on the loom, tossing the shuttle back and forth through the threads (*Il.* 23.760-3); and two house-wives (vivid touch!) running out into the middle of the street, wrangling hotly over some point of dissension:

'saying many things that are true and many that are not—for anger brings those also to the lips.' (*Il.* 20.252-5).

There is the frightened little child dodging under the protecting skirts of its mother (*Il.* 8.271), and that other exquisitely touching picture of the small girl crying to be taken up in her mother's arms:

'A young child running along after her mother and pleading to be lifted up; snatching at her dress and holding her back from her bustling work, looking up at her with tear-filled eyes till she take her up in her arms.' (*Il.* 16.7-19).

We are shown a youngster building sand-castles on the sea-shore, and immediately scattering them to pieces with his hands and feet (*Il.* 15.362-4); a boy spinning his top (*Il.* 14.413); and happy groups of children gathering in the vintage and dancing to the music of a young flute-player:

'Young maidens and boys, hearts gay with childish glee, were carrying the honey-sweet grapes in woven baskets, while in their midst a youth played delightful music on a clear-toned lyre and chanted with boyish tender voice the vintage Linus song, the children keeping time in unison, skipping along with dance and shouts of joy.' (*Il.* 18.567-72).

There is the band of Phaeacian boys dancing with dazzling-agility of foot, delighted by the tricks of Alius and Laodamas—one of whom would catch while his feet were off the ground the ball which his companion had thrown up toward the clouds, whereat both would dance off over the sward with amazing skill (*Od.* 8.370-80). The group of mischievous boys pelting with rocks a patiently grazing ass (*Il.* 11.558-62), or stirring up a nest of wasps so that any traveler coming by and unwittingly disturbing them will be suddenly overwhelmed by a stream of them pouring out, 'bold and stout of heart,' in defense of their young (*Il.* 16.259-65).

We meet the motherly old housemaid of Hector (*Il.* 6.381-9); the slave carrying an infant on her fragrant bosom, as she follows her mistress through the city (*Il.* 6.399-401); the traveler, object of care to Zeus (*Od.* 6.206-8; cf. 9.269-71), perhaps fleeing a rising torrent that is sweeping all before it (*Il.* 5.597-9); beggars working in the farmyards for their meal (*Od.* 17.20-1); a band of women and heralds preparing a meal for toiling reapers under an oak-tree, while the lord of the estate stands looking on in silent satisfaction over his bountiful harvest (*Il.* 18.550-60). We meet old Axylus, the hospitable, in an unforgettable experience of thorough acquaintance in a single momentary glance, just as he is slain by Diomedes:

'He used to dwell in well-built Arisbe, rich in possessions and friendly to all men. His home was near the road, and every passer-by found there a welcome. But now not one of them was on hand to stand between him and his foes and stave off grievous death . . .'
(*Il.* 6.12-19).

There are other brief word-pictures in abundance: young lovers in tender converse over their mutual dreams (*Il.* 22.127-8); a beloved father recovering from a critical sickness, his returning health a cause of joy to his children and himself (*Od.* 5.394-7); a fugitive who has slain a man and come to kneel at the feet of some prince in a foreign land to ask his sanctuary, and object of excited wonder to all about (*Il.* 24.480-2); a man stepping hastily back, pale with terror, on coming across a snake in a wooded mountain valley (*Il.* 3.33-5); the little race of pygmies battling against a devastating flock of storks flying down on their fields from the streams of Ocean at the approach of winter (*Il.* 2.3-7); a child swineherd perishing from cold in a wintry torrent (*Il.* 21.282-3); a father mournfully burying the ashes of his son, just married (*Il.* 23.222-3); tender boys and poor widows weeping for their distant home (*Il.* 2.289-90).

A host of daily occupations of the Homeric world are revealed to us when the poet describes people at work: fishermen casting their lines and hauling out the quivering fish (*Od.* 12.251-4); women weaving sails for swift ships (*Od.* 7.109-11); the captain of a merchant-ship sitting in his vessel of many oars, his mind full of anxiety

about the cargo and the route, and of clever bargaining (*Od.* 8.161-4); a ship-carpenter smoothing off timber (*Od.* 9.384-6), or putting it in final form with all the skill he holds as a gift from Athena (*Il.* 15.410-2), or felling huge trees in the forests with his pitiless axe, to be part of some vessel (*Il.* 13.389-91); a man cutting down a slender poplar for a fellow of his skilfully wrought chariot, the tree lying along the river's edge, a sight to marvel at (*Il.* 4.482-7); men grouped in a circle, stretching a hide prepared for the process by a long soaking in oil (*Il.* 17.389-93); a man putting sap into rich milk to curdle it the sooner as he stirs it vigorously (*Il.* 5.902-3).

There is the bard, well versed in song and the use of his lyre, deftly attaching a new string to the peg of his instrument (*Od.* 21.406-8); the craftsman inlaying gold on silver, 'and beautiful is the work he does' (*Od.* 6.232-4); the potter spinning his wheel with his hands, to test if it runs smoothly (*Il.* 18.600-1); sailors hoisting sail into the morning breeze (*Il.* 1.478-82), or launching their trim black ship (*Il.* 1.141-3; *Od.* 13.70-85), or beaching it high upon the sands (*Il.* 1.432-8, 485-7); now rowing with rhythmic strength (*Od.* 579-80, etc.), now trembling with fear as a huge wave threatens to engulf them (*Il.* 15.624-8); or perhaps collapsing from weariness when some god sends them a breeze after long labor at the oars (*Il.* 7.4-6); a diver (*Od.* 12.413); a blacksmith, plunging the hot iron, 'loudly shrieking', into cold water, for 'that is its strength' (*Od.* 9.391-3).

Many interesting glimpses of the farmer's life are provided in Homer's pages: one yeoman, weary and hungry from ploughing all day, goes rejoicing home at nightfall to his meal, 'his knees wobbling beneath him' (*Od.* 13.31-4); another drives his team steadily down the furrow to the cup of honey-sweet wine which awaits him at its end, then turns his plow about hastening to finish another furrow! (*Il.* 18.542-7); others, with measuring-rods in their clenched fists, are hotly wrangling over their respective boundaries in some bit of common land (*Il.* 12.421-3). At one time they are reaping, opposite rows facing each other as they work down the line, and the sheaves of grain fall thick and fast (*Il.* 11.67-9); another

time they are winnowing the grain, casting it up in the air for golden-hued Demeter to separate from the chaff with her strong breezes (*Il.* 5.499-502); again, they are cutting an irrigation-ditch, down which the water rushes into the fields (*Il.* 21.257-62). There is the herdsman arranging his flock (*Il.* 2.474-5), or easily carrying in one hand the newly-shorn fleece of a ram (*Il.* 12.451-2), or sitting on a high lookout, gazing out over the misty, wine-dark sea (*Il.* 5.770-1), where perchance he descries in the distance a gathering storm, 'and he shudders at the sight and hurries his flocks under the brow of a cave' (*Il.* 4.275-9), or watching over his flocks at night under the friendly and beautiful stars (*Il.* 8.559).

We see a man slaying a bull for its hide (*Il.* 17.520-2), others watering an orchard (*Il.* 21.346-7), or boiling a pot of meat over a blazing fire while appetizing vapors pervade the air (*Il.* 21.362-4), or protecting their folds from a ravaging lion (*Il.* 5.554-8); while another man is keeping alive some glowing embers for future use, by covering them over with ashes (*Od.* 5.488-90). There are shipwrecked sailors reaching land, weary and encrusted with brine, and greatly rejoicing at finding solid earth once more beneath their feet (*Od.* 23.234-8); others guided back to their friends on shore by the light of a blazing beacon on some mountain top, lit when the storm carried them suddenly out to sea (*Il.* 19.375-8). There are pirate-traders sailing from port to port in search of booty and purchasers (*Od.* 15.415-84); a besieged city calling on its neighbors for help by a great trumpet blast or fires at night (*Il.* 18.207-13, 219-20); men taming a wild ox for the yoke (*Il.* 13.571-2); a gay wedding festival, with bridal procession, music and dancing, and housewives standing on their doorsteps to watch the celebration with wrapt interest (*Il.* 18.491-6). We see priests building a shrine to some local god (*Il.* 1.39), or preparing a sacrifice (*Il.* 1.458-74), or offering up a sacred hecatomb (*Il.* 2.305-7); a man throwing a spear to test his strength (*Il.* 15.358-9), or casting the quoit (*Il.* 11.147), or showing off his skill by jumping from horse to horse as his four steeds fly along the streets and the people gaze on in awe (*Il.* 15.679-84); young maidens and youths gaily dancing,

'clasping each other's wrists with their hands', all dressed up in gleaming garments, the girls wearing garlands, the boys bright knives (*Il.* 18.593-600).

Thus does a whole people come to life before our delighted gaze. It would be possible to expand this list of passages about the common folk with the addition of many minor instances here omitted. But what we have given is eloquent proof enough of the catholicity and exuberant abundance of his poetically mirrored world.

It is true, then, in more than one sense that

'This is Homer, the godlike, whose sweet-toned wisdom has honored

All proud Greece by his song, giver of fame and renown.²

NOTES

¹ Cf. Karl Rothe: 'Dennoch führt uns der Dichter in den Gleichnissen die verschiedensten Stände des arbeitenden Volkes vor und zeigt dadurch, dass ihm nichts Menschliches fremd sei. Solche umfassende Kenntnis des menschlichen Lebens wie der Natur hat weder irgend ein griechischer noch römischer Dichter. Wie weit steht in dieser Beziehung z.B. Virgil hinter Homer zurück!' (*Die Ilias als Dichtung*, p. 131).

² From the reputed epitaph on Homer's grave at Argos, given in the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi*, lines 309-10 in the edition of Monro and Allen, *Homeri Opera* (OCT). Vol. 5, p. 237.

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UBINAM GENTIUM SUMUS?

Anybody who sets out to answer the Ciceronian question, 'Where in the world are we?', with reference to the Classics ought to be allowed to establish a few escape clauses at the very beginning. Extent of experience necessarily limits the validity of opinion. No one has been everywhere. No one has read all the books. No one has gathered all the data from all the schools, from all the teachers, and from all the students. Nobody is omniscient. Hence, the charitably disposed will make allowance for peculiarity of opinion if it seems to come from immaturity or from provincialism.

In this world of 1946 Latin lives in a house without a foundation. There was once a reliable background on which Latin teachers could pleasantly establish a modest knowledge of the intri-

cacies of ancient life. The Classics flourished in America when teachers could pin their hopes on the scholarly, factual experiences in the first eight years of a schoolboy's life. These experiences did not embrace clay thumping, paper folding, and jigsaw puzzle solving to the exclusion of learning the multiplication table, the parts of speech, and the points of the compass. The Classics flourished in America when teachers could assume that a child ready for the ninth grade had behind him eight years of school life in a family where home study and the mastery of details were acceptable virtues. The Classics flourished in America when teachers did not have to allow the length and difficulty of their assignments to be based on the amount of competition offered by 'Personality,' The Lone Ranger, and the antics of Cornel Wilde. The Classics flourished in America when teachers did not have to search in vain among their students for respect for authority born of wisdom and mature experience.

The sound acquisition of facts in the formative years, the sympathetic encouragement of parents for academic achievement on the part of their children, the love of learning for learning's sake, and tolerance for the opinions of age—all these desirable characteristics of the background for the teaching of the Classics have gone, or they are so thinly spread among us that their presence is negligible. Perhaps they have not gone forever, but they have disappeared to a marked degree from the present scene; and on it we cannot intelligently fix sightless eyes.

Of course we have not been inactive. We have experimented with sarcasm in our journals. We have solicited and used testimonials from the great and near great. We have put to the test the theory that a feeling of snobbish superiority might attract to us a sufficient number of willing souls. We have succumbed to the blandishments of educators who have persuaded us to teach Latin on the level of the social sciences. We have toyed in an amateurish way with dilution, with qualitative and quantitative reduction. In an effort to make our subject lively we have cluttered our lives with Roman doll babies, with derivative charts, and with Latinized versions of *The Star Spangled Banner*. It is small reason

that we ask ourselves, 'Where in the world are we?'. A word stronger than 'world' and suggestive of the lower regions would hardly be inappropriate.

We have one consolation. We shall be allowed to lie on the thorny coverlet of errors which we ourselves have woven. It is hard to say which blunder or blunders have been most damaging to our cause. Perhaps all of them can be grouped under the single heading of blind, unresisting obedience to tradition. We have avoided innovation on a nation-wide scale as we would avoid a plague. We have stubbornly insisted, for example, that a year of secondary-school Latin be devoted to a study of Roman oratory and its by-products, politics and government. Honest, Christian teachers have had to lay perjury to their immortal souls to stir up interest in a kind of literature which their students can scarcely have understood had the speeches been spoken yesterday in the United States Senate. This same author, whose oratory I feel is somewhat beyond the capabilities of children of high school age, has a host of newsy letters and a mass of treatises and essays all lending themselves to short, definitive selections. But the desire on the part of state departments and curriculum makers to expose children to two or three Catilinarians, a speech for Archias, and one for the Manilian Law has kept the students from seeing the side of Latin which their age and background would best allow them to appreciate. Nor is this traditional respect for Cicero's orations quite the end of our troubles.

Let us be sure to remember that children of 16 and 17 are apparently viewing with suspicious eyes the wisdom of spending an entire year reading about the geography, customs, and subjugation of Gaul. They are doubtful, too, about the unnatural number of hexameters required by one man, weighed down with a sack of Augustan propaganda, to found a kingdom.

Now I shall not be the one to maintain that submission to mediocrity is an admirable virtue. I think that the results will not satisfy our present standards if we reduce Latin reading to the anecdotal level. I do believe that if we do not unbend a little in the choice of subject matter, we shall live to see the day when Latin will be

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strictly a luxury subject. Latin will enjoy a fate similar to that of opera and symphony. It will be taught, if at all, in larger cities where the size of the population will guarantee a cultural interest strong enough to justify Latin for the few. But I am not interested in Latin for New York, Dallas, Pittsburgh, and Boston. I am interested in a little Latin for every cross-roads country schoolhouse in the United States, a little Latin decently taught, a little Latin which will be able to lay for the student an introduction to the understanding of the priceless heritage handed down to him from ancient Greece and Rome, a little Latin, the quantity and quality of which will be a little below the standards of the epic, the oration, and the military commentary.

This is not the time for me to set forth a list of authors, of literary types, of pieces to be used for Latin reading, even if I had such a program in mind. I believe that this is the time, however, for teachers to lay plans for an attack against the traditional courses in Caesar, Cicero, and Vergil. I know that some textbook authors have already made a delicate approach to this problem. The solution cannot be pleasant for any of us. My heart is not in this kind of talk, but I feel that we must come face to face with reality in the hope that shorter selections, fewer selections, less complicated selections, less technical selections may save the day for us. Whether we like it or not, we must find Latin with pedestrian appeal.

But blind obedience to tradition in the matter of content has not been the only error. We have stubbornly insisted, too, on the right to offer four years of Latin on the secondary level. We have insisted on equality with the courses in English and in social science. This we have done in face of classes which have diminished sharply as children have advanced through the four-year program. Latin for the fourth year has barely a tenth or a twentieth of the enrollment for the first year. Teachers of Vergil have literally had to snare their prey to keep their classes open. You and I have been taught to insist on quality, but school boards, principals, and superintendents do not understand such lofty idealism. The truth is that emphasis upon a four-year course

has worn thin the welcome which Latin once had in public and independent schools. We should be as aware of this fact as we are aware of the competition given us by typing, shorthand, band, cheerleading, *et alia*. The possibilities in choice of subjects have been more than tripled in the past 40 years. The demands made upon the pupil's time by broadened extracurricular and cocurricular interests have increased in proportion to the enlarged program of studies. Industrial education has cut away from the Classics large sections of boys whose knowledge of Latin will be limited for all their lives to *e pluribus unum* and perhaps *sic semper tyrannis*. The school bus, the cafeteria, the library, work done on the farm and in the drugstore outside school hours, the student council, guidance classes, conferences with the school dentist, doctor, and psychologist are a few of the aspects for the phenomenon known as education which paralyze a four-year course in Latin. They are strictly twentieth-century aspects. These as well as many other factors are slowly but surely strangling the life out of Latin as we know it to-day. To me they indicate that a four-year course in Latin on a nation-wide scale is unsound and cannot endure. Classicists would be indulging in day dreams if they should hope to receive sympathy and encouragement from school administrators. The pressure is on, has been on for twenty years. We are already living on borrowed time.

Again I say that I am not willing to submit to the demands of mediocrity and ignorance. I should not think of reducing the amount of time spent on Latin in places where there is reasonable security in a four-year program; but I do believe that if we do not voluntarily suggest and accept a reduction generally in the number of years required for Latin on the secondary level, we shall continue to be worried and frightened by the thought that the day must surely come when no Latin will be taught to the masses of our students.

I do not feel required to say to-day whether the quantitative aspects of our problem should be approached in terms of a one, two, or three-year course in Latin; nor do I feel required to say at what age levels a reduced amount of Latin

should be taught; but I believe that to-day is the day to come to grips with the unpleasant subject of time. We cannot much longer avoid it.

Where in the world are we? We are face to face with a problem that involves quality and quantity. Our answer to it, if there is to be an answer, must come from us all. We must be unanimous, or nearly so, in our decision. We must present our answer with the combined consent of all or nearly all classical groups in the United States. The minority must be willing to abide by the decision of the majority. For us all a change in quantity and quality represents a kind of scholastic sacrifice; but if the choice is to be half a loaf or none, I feel sure that most of us will be willing to settle for something less desirable in order that we may keep a firm grip on the little which we shall have.

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(Continued from page 159)

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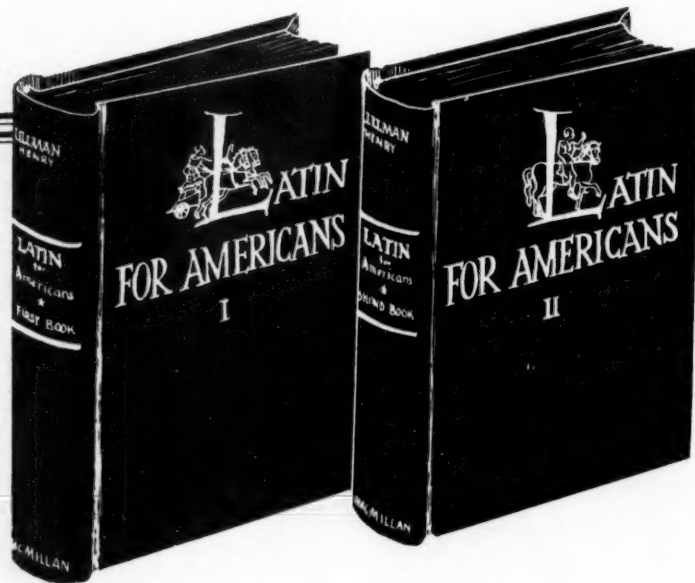
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